



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Resources and Development Committee approves Community-Based Land Used Plans for Chichiltah and Hardrock Chapter

CHICHILTAH, N.M. – On Wednesday, the Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0322-17 and Legislation No. 0331-17, recertifying Chichiltah Chapter's and certifying Hardrock Chapter's Community-Based Land Used Plan. Chichiltah Chapter is located approximately 13-miles south of Gallup, N.M. and Hardrock Chapter is located approximately 45-miles west of Chinle, Ariz.

Pursuant to Navajo Nation Code Title 26 section 2004, chapter governments shall reevaluate and readjust their community land use plan every five years to meet the needs of their changing community.

Council Delegate Seth Damon (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Lichíí', Rock Springs, Tsayatoh), who represents Chichiltah Chapter, stated that the chapter administration and Community-Based Land Use Plan committee have worked diligently to reevaluate the community plan to reflect the community's goals, concerns, and developments.

"One of the core purposes of the land use planning is to identify and assess lands for residential and economic development, but the complexity of the land status, permits, and leases within the chapter vicinity has held back growth and development. The readjustment of the plan provides alternative approaches to all challenges," stated Delegate Damon.

Delegate Damon added, "I also want to thank the community members for being involved with the creation of the plan. There were numerous meetings and many inputs and recommendations were included."

Chichiltah Chapter's land use plan focuses on land use, economic development, transportation, utilities, housing, natural and cultural resources, facilities, and implementation.

Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill), who represents Hardrock Chapter, stated, "The chapter's vision for their community land use plan is to promote sustainable and organized growth, while maintaining a clean, safe, and healthy environment and enhancing a strong Diné culture."

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle) asked if the community's concerns and issues related to the Navajo Partition Lands were included in the land use plan.

According to the chapter's land use plan, in the early 1960s, the chapter experienced various land restrictions and reduction. The Federal District Court effectively halted all forms of community development in the former Joint Use Area, among Hopi and the Nation, for nearly 27-years and approximately 200 families were relocated to the Navajo Partitioned Lands. Additionally, the chapter lost three-fourths of its original land based as a result of the Navajo-Hopi Land Settlement Act of 1974.

Hardrock Chapter president Timothy Johnson stated that the land use plan prioritizes water delivery systems, land use conflicts, roads, housing, solid waste, grazing regulations, telecommunications, economic development, community healing, utilities, school facilities, and improving relations with the Hopi Tribe to address the needs of the Hopi Land Partitioned Lands.

The Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0322-17 with a 4-0 vote and Legislation No. 0331-17 with a 3-0 vote. The committee serves as the final authority for the bills.

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